

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 06385 300650Z

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BENC, AF

SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECT: KANDAHAR CEMENT

REF: STATE 213787

1. TO EMBASSY'S KNOWLEDGE, KANDAH CEMENT WAS NOT RPT NOT DISCUSSED IN AUGUST 24 CABINET MEETING. WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT CONTRACT HAS BEEN TURNED DOWN OR THAT THE PROJECT HAS BEEN REOPENED FOR PUBLIC BIDDING.

2. ENG. MOHAMMAD HASHEM TOUFIQUI HAS RPT HAS, IN FACT, RESIGNED HIS POST AS PRESIDENT OF INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 21. HOWEVER, RESIGNATION, WHICH TOUFIQUI HAS BEEN CONTEMPLATING FOR SOME TIME, WAS NOT RPT NOT DUE TO KANDAHAR CEMENT NEGOTIATIONS. MOREOVER, MINISTRY HAS CALLED TOUFIQUI BACK TEMPORARILY TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY IN FINAL CEMENT PLANT NEGOTIATIONS.

3. FULLER REPS (KAPOOR, GREEF, AND GRAF) NOW IN KABUL AND WILL BE INFORMING COMPANY DIRECTLY CONCERNING THE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS. BRIEFLY, FOR DEPARTMENT'S INFORMATION RECENT EVENTS HAVE BEEN AS FOLLOWS. FIRST, THE FULLER-FISCHBACH TEAM NEGOTIATED A CONTRACT WITH PRESIDENT OF INDUSTRIES TOUFIQUI. TOUFIQUI SUBMITTED THE DRAFT CONTRACT TO THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING WHICH RETURNED IT WITH NUMEROUS CHANGES AND SUGGESTIONS. FULLER-FISCHBACH, TOUFIQUI, AND A MINISTRY OF PLANNING REP THEN RENEGOTIATED THE CONTRACT.

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PAGE 02 KABUL 06385 300650Z

ON AUGUST 11, THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE COMPLETED, AND IT

APPEARED THAT ONLY THE CABINET'S APPROVAL WAS NEEDED FOR THE CONTRACT TO BE SIGNED. HOWEVER, A FEW DAYS LATER, FULLER AND FISHBACH WERE PRESENTED WITH A LARGELY NEW CONTRACT WITH EXTENSIVE CHANGES DRAFTED BY THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING. SEVERAL OF THE REVISIONS ARE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE AND, IN EFFECT, THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE MOVED BACK TO SQUARE ONE. THE FULLER REPS (GREEF AND GRAF) LEFT AFGHANISTAN FOR INDIA TO CONSULT WITH TEAM LEADER KAPOOR THERE CONCERNING THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT.

4. ON AUGUST 23, WITH FULLER REPS ABSENT, JOHN GIVENS OF FISHBACH MET WITH MINISTER OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES ASEFI AND MINISTER OF PLANNING KHURRAM AT THEIR REQUEST. TOUFIQUI, WHO HAD RESIGNED TWO DAYS EARLIER, ALSO ATTENDED THE MEETING. THE MINISTERS URGED GIVENS TO REASSEMBLE THE FULLER-FISHBACH TEAM TO COMPLETE THE NEGOTIATIONS, GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY CONSIDERED THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE GOA AND THE AMERICAN COMPANIES TO BE MINOR. FULLER REPS RETURNED TO KABUL ON AUGUST 28 FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

5. ONE HITCH DEVELOPING IS THAT THE FULLER OFFER EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 4 AND HOME OFFICE HAS INFORMED THE TEAM HERE THAT PRICE INCREASES WILL BE NECESSARY IF THE CONTACT IS NOT CONCLUDED BEFORE THAT DATE. FULLER AND FISHBACH TEAM PLAN TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS TODAY (AUGUST 28).

ELIOT

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